

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 ACDA-19 IO-14 SAJ-01 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 EURE-00 /137 W

----- 105599

P R 021823Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7251

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13592

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: POLITICAL TENSIONS HEIGHTEN WITHIN CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT

DIA FOR A2 AND DI5

SUMMARY: THE ITALIAN POLITICAL CRISIS LONG ON THE HORIZON  
MAY NOW BE NEAR, TRIGGERED BY PSDI PRESIDENT TANASSI'S SHARP  
PUBLIC ATTACK ON THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY FOR HAVING  
"DESTROYED" THE CENTER-LEFT COALITION. PARTY MEETINGS  
SCHEDULED DURING COURSE OF NEXT WEEK ARE LIKELY TO DETERMINE  
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WHETHER FULL BLOWN CRISIS WILL ARISE. END SUMMARY.

1. MARIO TANASSI, PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, MAY HAVE PULLED THE PLUG ON THE CENTER-LEFT COALITION WITH A PUBLIC BLAST, ISSUED AT PARTY DIRECTORATE MEETING OCTOBER 2, DIRECTED AGAINST THE SOCIALIST PARTY, IN WHICH HE CHARGED, IN ESSENCE, THAT THE SOCIALISTS HAD DESTROYED THE COALITION THROUGH ITS AMBIGUOUS AND CONTRADICTORY POSITIONS, ATTEMPTING AT ONCE TO BE BOTH PARTY OF GOVERNMENT AND IN THE OPPOSITION. QTE WITH THE SOCIALISTS, THERE CAN BE NO EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT; WITHOUT THE SOCIALISTS, THERE IS NO EFFECTIVE MAJORITY. UNQTE.

2. TANASSI APPEARS TO HAVE CAUGHT NOT ONLY THE SOCIALISTS AND DC BY SURPRISE, BUT EVEN SENIOR ECHELONS OF HIS OWN PARTY. PSI SECRETARIAT MEETING, EARLIER SCHEDULED FOR TONIGHT, WILL LIKELY GIVE TOP PRIORITY TO TANASSI'S STATEMENT AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS. ONE PSI SOURCE TELLS US THAT IF SECRETARIATE DECIDES TO CONVOKE PSI DIRECTORATE TOMORROW, THIS WILL SIGNAL IMMINENT DISSOLUTION OF CENTER-LEFT. WE ARE INFORMED, HOWEVER, THAT PSDI DIRECTORATE YESTERDAY, DEMURRED AT GIVING QUICK FORMAL APPROVAL TO TANASSI'S STAND AFTER ONLY A FIRST READING, AND HAVE DEFERRED FURTHER FORMAL CONSIDERATION OF IT UNTIL OCTOBER 8. FACT THAT TANASSI'S VIEWS DO NOT YET REPRESENT FORMAL STATEMENT OF PSDI POSITION MAY SLOW DOWN FUSH OF EVENTS BUT PSDI SOURCES SEEM TO ANTICIPATE THE ESSENCE OF HIS POSITION WILL BE ADOPTED.

3. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS HAVE NOT COMMENTED OFFICIALLY BUT APPEAR AT PAINS TO MAINTAIN PRESENT PUBLIC STANCE THAT EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO AVOID A CRISIS. DC DIRECTORATE SCHEDULED MEET OCTOBER 8 TO DISCUSS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION, AND COMMUNIST PARTY DECIDED YESTERDAY ON DIRECTORATE MEETING OCTOBER 7. NO OFFICIAL PCI COMMENTARY ON TANASSI STATEMENT AS YET.

4. WIDESPREAD PUZZLEMENT EXISTS AS TO MOTIVATION AND TIMING OF TANASSI MOVE. UNHAPPILY SOME FINGERS ARE NOW POINTING PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY AT US AS AN INSTIGATING FACTOR. A SOURCE WHO IS CLOSE TO TANASSI SAID THAT TANASSI MAY HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY A TALK WITH PRESIDENT LEONE. ACCORDING

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TO THIS STORY, LEONE HAD TOLD TANASSI THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD BEEN VERY OUTSPOKEN TO LEONE ON THE NEED FOR STRONG, EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT IN ITALY, ONE WITHOUT COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION. TANASSI, ACCORDING TO THIS INTERPRETATION, MAY HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THIS INFORMATION TO ADOPT A TOUGH POSITION VERSUS THE SOCIALISTS WHOM HE CONSIDERS TO HAVE EFFECTIVELY HAMSTRUNG THE GOVERNMENT. SIMILARLY, THIS AFTERNOON'S LEFTIST PAESE SERA HEADLINES QTE TANASSI'S EXIT

SUGGESTED BY WASHINGTON? UNQTE. SUB-HEADLINE: QTE PRESSURES BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR ON THE LEADERS OF THE DC, PSDI AND PRI UNQTE. STORY ITSELF, HOWEVEF, CARRIES NO SUPPORT FOR HEADLINE OTHER THAN SEMI-FOOTNOTE CITING LEFT-WIND WEEKLY (GOIRNI-VIE NUEVE) ARTICLE WHICH REPORTS THAT AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, PRIOR LEONE VISIT, MET WITH WIDE RANGE OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, SOCIALISTS AND REPUBLICANS AND EXHORTED THEM QTE IN COLD-WAR TERMS UNQTE TO HELP SUPPORT FANFANI, PRESUMABLY AT THE SUGGESTION OF FANFANI HIMSELF.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH FULL BLOWN CIRSIS APPEARS INCREASINGLY LIKELY MAJOR PROTAGONISTS IN CENTER-LEFT COALITION (DC AND PSI) HAVE YET TO SLAM THE DOOR ON POSSIBILITY OF LAST MINUTE COMPROMISE WHICH WOULD LEAVE THE CENTER-LEFT FORMULA AT LEAST TEMPORARILY INTACT. LACK OF EVIDENT VIABLE ALTERNATIVES TO PRESENT COALITION AND UNPREDICTABLE OUTCOME OF EARLY ELECTIONS ARE MAJOR REMAINING FACTORS INDUCING PRUDENCE. BEAUDRY

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## Message Attributes

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